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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: DALAI LAMA IN WASHINGTON; 2/19/10; BUENOS AIRES

SUMMARY

¶1. President Obama's meeting with the Dalai Lama led international news sections, with commentary ranging from the meeting's "modesty" to the "deteriorating relations" with China. All articles focused on the President's decision to not hold the meeting in the Oval Office in order to "not irritate" China, but also quoted the Dalai Lama being "very happy" with the result. End summary.

DALAI LAMA IN WASHINGTON

¶2. Observing that President Obama received the Dalai Lama "not with the protocol corresponding to a head of state," largest circulation Clarin's Washington correspondent Ana Baron focused on Obama's efforts to "try not to irritate China." With the U.S. "needing China's financing to sustain its fiscal deficit" and desiring Chinese "efforts to stop" Iran's nuclear program, Baron noted that the meeting "could not have had a lower profile," with the decision not to have a press conference or television cameras, or to hold the meeting in the Map Room, instead of the Oval Office.

<http://www.clarin.com/diario/2010/02/19/elmundo/i-02143116.htm>

¶3. Peer Meinert, centrist Critica's Washington correspondent, followed much the same tone as Baron. However, Meinert commented that while the meeting could not have been "more modest" in order to not contribute to "deteriorating relations" with China, Obama could not have "defrauded" his political base by not meeting the Dalai Lama. Additionally, Obama faces critics that claim he is not "sufficiently hard" against the new Asian "superpower," or in terms of the Republicans, the "policy of yielding" to China.

http://criticadigital.com/impresas/index.php?s_ecc=nota

&nid=38769

¶4. In addition to China's objection to the meeting, left-leaning Pagina 12 reprinted an article from Britain's The Independent that reflected criticism from human rights groups. After "previously angering" human rights groups by "declining to see the Dalai Lama" in October, the article quotes the vice-president of the International Campaign for Tibet questioning why the meeting was not in the Oval Office since meetings with "Girl Scouts and

basketball players" take place there. In addition, the article cites the Executive Director for Students for a Free Tibet saying that "as leader of the free world," President Obama "is in a position like no one else" to help Tibet achieve its goals.

<http://www.pagina12.com.ar/diario/elmundo/4-1 40604-2010-02-19.html>

¶5. A Reuters newswire covering the Dalai Lama's visit to Washington "despite Chinese threats" appeared in financial dailies *Ambito Financiero* and *El Cronista* and second-largest daily *La Nacion*. The article highlighted President Obama's decision to hold the meeting in the Map Room as opposed to the Oval Office, as the Dalai Lama is a "spiritual leader, not political." Although the meeting could "complicate" Obama's efforts to get China to help on "key issues," it is "considered improbable" that China-U.S. relations will "escalate to an open conflict" as the economies of both countries are "firmly interlaced."

<http://www.cronista.com/notas/221731-obama-re cibio-al-dalai-lama-pe se-las-amenazas-chinas>

http://www.lanacion.com.ar/nota.asp?nota_id=1 234848

¶6. Conservative daily *La Prensa* and financial daily *Buenos Aires Economico* used an EFE newswire as its coverage on the Dalai Lama. The newswire highlighted President Obama's "support for the

Tibetan cause" and the Dalai Lama's reply that he was "very happy" with the meeting. EFE did note the "diplomatic tension" between the U.S. and China over Taiwanese weapon sales, the exchange rate of the Chinese yuan, and Chinese cyber-attacks against American businesses.

<http://www.laprensa.com.ar/354876-Obama-avalor-la-causa-tibetana-al-reunirse-con-el-Dalai-Lama.note.aspx>

¶7. Political consultant Luis Rosales wrote an opinion article in *Buenos Aires Economico* commenting on President Obama and the "Tibetan dilemma." As President Obama is the "coolest" President since John F. Kennedy, he could not "snub" the Dalai Lama during his trip to Washington. Yet, by meeting with the Dalai Lama, President Obama committed an "almost unforgivable offense" in China's opinion. Thus, this creates a dilemma. Rosales opines that while as "world leader of peace," President Obama "cannot stop defending Tibet," he "should not offend Beijing's power" as the U.S. is the "largest debtor" to China.

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